Investment in biotech sector

428. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the biggest challenge for the country's biotech industry is to promote investment by venture capital;

(b) if so, what steps his Ministry has taken or propose to take to augment resources for this sector; and

(c) the details of the investment that has been infused in biotechnology sector, during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) and (b) Sir, there is an overall improvement in venture capital funding in biotechnology sector. Financialand Investment Corporation of India (ICICI), Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and other nationalized banks are the major financing sources where as per Cll report, IDBI and ICICI have committed about 35% and other nationalized banks have committed 20% of funding of their resources for the biotech sector. The Ministry of Science and Technology promotes the biotech through various programmes instituted under the Technology Development Board (TDB), Programme Aimed at Technological Self Reliance (PATSER) and Homegrown Technology (HGT) Programme under Technology Information, Forcasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC).

(c) The Department of Biotechnology has earmarked Rs. 1 crore for the year 2002-2003 for the promotion of technology incubators, pilot projects and biotech development fund. The Department of Biotechnology has invested Rs. 116.46 crores, Rs. 140.90 crores and Rs. 174.97 crores during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 respectively.